

This SOP implements Section 6.14 of the Policy Manual.

A. INTRODUCTION

Workplaces are a reflection of society. The same violent acts that occur in society at-large also occur in the workplace. This is to prepare supervisors and employees to act in the event of an act or imminent threat of violence in the workplace. If imminent danger of personal injury or a threat to life occurs in the workplace, employees are not expected to engage in “heroics” of any kind. Employees should take measures to protect themselves and others and to escape to safety.

B. WARNING SIGNS OF A TROUBLED EMPLOYEE OR PERSON

The following list is not inclusive of every warning sign. Relationships with supervisors, peers, and the public provides an opportunity to note when something has changed in a person’s functioning and/or to note when a person’s functioning poses a threat of violence to others in a workplace

“Workplace violence can start as small incidents involving negative remarks and inappropriate behavior or it may escalate to physical or psychological violence. It is much easier to prevent violence by stopping small incidents than trying to deal with the aftermath of a major crisis. It is extremely important to understand that the following behaviors do not mean a person will become violent. Each situation is unique and professional judgement or outside assistance may be necessary to determine if intervention is necessary. Always take note if:

- There is a change in their behavior patterns
- The frequency and intensity of the behaviors are disruptive to the work environment
- The person is exhibiting many of these behaviors, rather than a few”

Behavioral including Work Performance Warning Signs

- Safety Issues (more accident prone, needless risks, disregard for health and safety of self and others e.g. use/abuse of equipment/machinery)
- Decreased productivity (increased mistakes, missed deadlines, wasting time and materials, unsatisfactory work quality, testing limits of performance expectations, inconsistent work patterns- alternate patterns of high and low productivity, variations from typical behavior)
- Attendance Problems (excessive absenteeism, lateness, leaving work early)

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- Refusal to acknowledge job performance problems (argumentative, unreasonable, disparaging behavior including filing repeated complaints)
- Negative and inappropriate communication (swearing/emotional language, make inappropriate statements, complaints of unfair personal treatment, dramatic and unreasonable demands, talks about the same problems repeatedly without resolving them)
- Threatening behavior (physical, written, or verbal threats including verbalizing wish for something to happen to others, preoccupation with violence, violates other personal space or items)
- Extreme, odd, or bizarre behavior

Social Warning Signs

- Misinterpretation of communications from supervisors and coworkers
- Holds grudges towards supervisor (e.g. feels victimized) and peers
- Difficulty getting along with others (argumentative, excessive complaining, insistence on being right, feels entitled to something, uncooperative, unwarranted anger, and blames others for mistakes)
- Harasses and intimidates others
- Social isolation, withdrawn, or loner behavior (few friends and family)
- History of negative interpersonal relationships
- Obsessive involvement with his or her job
- Challenges peers and authority figures
- Lacks basic people skills
- Suspicious of others

Cognitive Warning Signs

- Concentration problems (forgetfulness, trouble recalling instructions/project details and deadlines, confusion, distraction)
- Faulty decision making
- Irrational beliefs and ideas
- Drastic changes in belief system
- Obsessive thought patterns/conversations
- Paranoia (believes others are out to get them)

Emotional Warning Signs

- Crying, sulking, temper tantrums
- Unshakeable depression (low energy, low self-esteem, despair, expresses hopelessness, suicidal ideation/threats, etc.)

- Evidence of serious stress in the employee's personal life (e.g. Divorce, separation, job loss, death of loved one, financial problems)
- Heightened anxiety/worry
- Impulsive/easily frustrated
- Constant anger
- History of violence (e.g. prior issues with law enforcement, domestic violence, interest in weapons, physical fights)
- Voices violent opinions (approval of violent behavior, hate group activity)

Physical Warning Signs

- Poor physical hygiene (especially if marked change in personal grooming habits)
- Evidence of possible drug or alcohol use/abuse
- Possible sleep disorder (e.g. signs of extreme fatigue/always tired, dark circles under eyes)
- Dramatic weight loss or gain
- Trembling or shaking
- Clenched jaws or fists
- Exaggerated or violent gestures
- Violates others personal space
- Pacing, restless, or repetitive movements
- Loud talking or chanting
- Glaring or avoiding eye contact
- Mention they are no longer taking medication

C. DEFINITION AND EXAMPLES

Workplace violence is a situation that jeopardizes the life or safety of employees or citizens (including customers/vendors) in the workplace or leads to the theft, destruction or abuse of property. Workplace violence occurs when someone commits or appears ready and able to commit violent acts through behaviors such as shown in the chart. A "Violence Emergency" requires immediate emergency aid (usually law enforcement). A "Hostile Action" is a lower threshold of violence that may not require immediate emergency aid.

Hostile Action	Violence Emergency
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any open threat (direct or conditional).• Stalking.• Intimidation, abuse or harassment.• Bizarre and/or irrational comments or actions indicating aggression or paranoia.• Notes of planned violence or anger aimed at the organization or another person.• Graphic depictions of violence.• Sabotage/vandalism.• Intentionally crowding to intimidate.• Reports from coworkers, or others describing violent, intimidating or stalking type behaviors.•	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical assault (hitting, shoving, pushing, kicking, sexual assault).• Display or use of weapon.• Attempted murder and/or murder.• Attempted suicide and/or suicide.• Robbery.• Any act of terrorism.• Taking of hostages.• Destruction of property (breaking or putting holes in doors, walls, windows, etc.).• Unremitting rampage of loud, threatening, or incoherent speech.

C. ACTION STEPS

If confronted with a **Hostile Action** perform the following:

NOTE: **If you feel danger is imminent, do the actions for a *Violence Emergency*.**

Do not intervene in aggression or attempt to diffuse the situation by yourself.

Accomplish as many of the following actions as feasible:

1. If danger is not imminent, investigate, observe and assess the situation and hostile behavior. Document your observations.
2. Inform security, upper management, and Human Resources of your observations and assessment, including the identity of any intended victim. Ask for instructions.
 - a. JFS employees call the Sheriff at 946-1470.

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- b. Downtown campus employees located at the County Administration Building, Courthouse, Taft Law Center, and 800 Broadway Building should call the Sheriff at 946-5373 between 7:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. After 4:30 call the after hours Security at 946-4925.
 - c. Paul Brown Stadium employees should call PBS Security at 455-4850 or press the panic button where available,
 - d. 250 William Howard Taft Building employees should contact Risk Management at 946-4999.
 - e. All other outlier buildings should follow steps 1-2 above.
3. Contact the Risk Manager at 946-4999 to construct a *Situational Reaction Plan*.

If confronted with a **Violence Emergency**, do the following:

- 1. Protect yourself and others by hiding or evacuating to a “safe room.” Remain in the “safe room” until help arrives.
- 2. Dial 911 and/or activate duress alarm when it is safe to do so. Provide 911 operator with your name, location, and briefly describe the situation.
- 3. Contact site security personnel (where present) when safe to do so.
- 4. Notify your management when safe to do so.
- 5. Notify the Risk Manager at 946-4999 when opportunity exists.
- 6. Building-specific call numbers for site security personnel:
 - a. JFS employees, after dialing 911, should call the Sheriff at 946-1470.
 - b. Downtown campus employees in the County Administration Building, Courthouse, Taft Law Center, and 800 Broadway, after dialing 911, should call the Sheriff at 946-5373 between 7:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. After 4:30, call after hours security at 946-4925.

- c. Paul Brown Stadium employees, after dialing 911, should call PBS Security at 455-4850 or press the panic button where available.
- d. 250 William Howard Taft Building employees, after dialing 911, should contact Risk Management at 946-4999.
- e. All other outlier buildings should follow steps 1-5 above.

D. OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. When informed of any event of workplace violence, supervisor/upper management will activate the Crisis Prevention and Management Team by calling the County Risk Manager at **946-4999**.
- 2. The CPMT will respond immediately to reports of threats or acts of violence, assess the situation and develop a plan to prevent and/or resolve the incident.
- 3. The CPMT will convene as requested or directed to implement the County Policy on preventing workplace violence.
- 4. The CPMT will advise and assist the Risk Manager in carrying out responsibilities to communicate and coordinate with County Agencies in the assessment, implementation, monitoring and management of on-going security measures to protect County personnel and property and the public.
- 5. Employees, supervisors and managers are expected to be familiar with information and guidelines produced by the CPMT; to attend training sessions as may be arranged by the CPMT; and to otherwise cooperate with the CPMT in its efforts to prevent violence in the workplace.
- 6. Orders of disciplinary suspension or removal will be served on employees by the Human Resources Department. The Human Resources Department will be available for pre-disciplinary conferences and grievance hearings. A secure, pre-designated area will be available for such meetings. The Sheriff's Office may be contacted to provide security as deemed appropriate.